

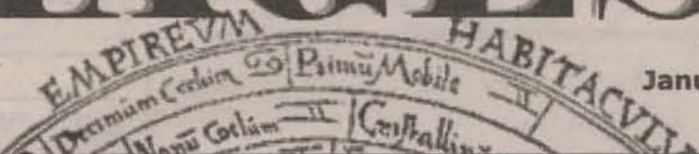
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Louisiana State University in Shreveport

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Thursday
January 25, 2007

Welcome Back Bash continues today

by Mike Schwalke

After the hectic first week of classes, once students begin to settle into their routines for the semester, the Student Activities Board sponsors Welcome Back Bash. The event will continue today in the UC lobby with a multitude of games and freebies for students to enjoy.



Samantha Parker, psychology major, creates her own sand art at the Welcome Back Bash that started Tuesday. The event is continuing today through 2 p.m.

"Welcome Back Bash is about showing students what organizations are on campus," said J.J. Thomas, sophomore human resources management major and concerts executive for the SAB. Thomas was one of the students who helped organize the event.

Brandy Donald, junior psychology major and presi-

dent of the Zeta Tau Alpha sorority said that the event is essential to her organization's recruiting efforts because it does not run a formal rush.

"Welcome Back Bash is important because it gets a lot of people in (the same place)," she said.

The Louisiana Association of Educators-Student Program president Katherine Suckle handed out LAE-SP brochures to students along with peppermint patties that said, "Are you 'mint' to be a teacher?" Suckle, an early childhood education senior, said that the LAE-SP has already started recruiting incoming freshman.

"We're trying to get continuing students who may not be aware (of the LAE-SP)," she said.

Although Welcome Back Bash is an opportunity for campus organizations to introduce themselves to students, the real draw is always the giveaways.

"I always wanted (a wax hand cast). I feel like I've been missing out," said senior pre-law major Sebastian Edwards. "It's my last year—I've got to get one."

Erica Page, a junior kine-



Junior mass communication major Quinton Shamsabody makes a wax hand during the Welcome Back Bash held during common hour on Tuesday.

siology student, also lined up for the wax hands.

"I always participate in all the fun, festive activities and try to be a good student," she said. "Honestly, I like the music."

As always, DJ Stanstyles of Party Pushaz, kept the UC

lobby shaking as students mingled.

Welcome Back Bash continues today in the UC with plenty of free prizes and SAB Coffee House series performer Scratch Track taking the UC Port stage at Common Hour.

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LSUS working on wireless Internet

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Sports
Men's basketball wins again

the **Almagest**

Volume 50, Issue 1

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"Almagest" is an Arabic word meaning "great" or "majestic." It is also the title of a book written by the ancient astronomer Ptolemy who is pictured on the front page of our paper.

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Editorial Policy

The information presented in this publication by no means reflects the opinions of the administration or staff of LSUS. *The Almagest* seeks to provide information for the LSUS campus and community; to involve students, faculty and staff; and to provide a public forum for ideas as guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution. Comments and complaints are welcome and should be addressed to Mike Schwalke, Editor-in-Chief. They must be accompanied by your full name and e-mail address.

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor are encouraged. However, the staff reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, length, and content. Any letter submitted by a club or organization must be signed by all members of the group or by the group's president. Letters should be e-mailed or submitted to the Almagest office, BH 344, by 5 p.m. on the Friday preceding the Thursday publication date. Please type the letter and include your classification and major. *The Almagest* reserves the right not to publish submitted materials. Obscene, libelous and anonymous letters will not be printed.

EDITORIAL**Congress votes to reduce student loan interest rates**

by Mike Schwalke

On Jan. 17 the House of Representatives passed the College Student Relief Act by a vote of 356-71. If the bill makes it through the Senate and across the president's desk, it will slash interest rates for subsidized student loans—those which are granted based on need—in half over five years from 6.8 to 3.4 percent. This comes after a crush of consolidations last summer when rates increased to the current 6.8 percent.

The White House is against this new legislation because it would undo last year's rate hikes and the \$12 billion that was cut from federal student loan programs. The fact that all of the attention is focused on need-based loans indicates that students who could not otherwise afford higher education will suffer the most. Students with low incomes and minimal or no financial assistance from their families will ultimately have to pay out thousands more dollars over the lives of their loans.

According to the College Board, tuitions for public universities are up by 35 percent over the last five years. Last year's rate increase also increased the total dollar amount students could borrow. The combination of higher rates and larger loans is a sinister ploy which will ultimately cripple future graduates with more debt. If tuitions continue to rise disproportionately to incomes, soon we will see a tremendous wave of loan defaults. The College Student Relief Act is a necessary step to ensure that this does not happen.

Last year's vote to increase rates was split

down partisan lines—in the Senate, David Vitter voted for the measure and Mary Landrieu voted against—with the majority Republicans ultimately having their way. This year the tables are turned, but, if the vote in Congress is any indication, party politics will not factor into the vote; however, all of the votes against the College Student Relief Act came from Republicans, including Rep. Jim McCrery.

A generation ago, entry-level jobs required a high school education; now they require a college diploma. With American workers scrambling to educate themselves, universities are seeing a seller's market and rapidly increasing tuitions are a result of simple supply and demand.

Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), the senior Democrat on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee in the Senate, has vowed to take up the matter in the Senate. He said his measure would also increase the amount of the Pell grant which, unlike student loans, does not have to be repaid.

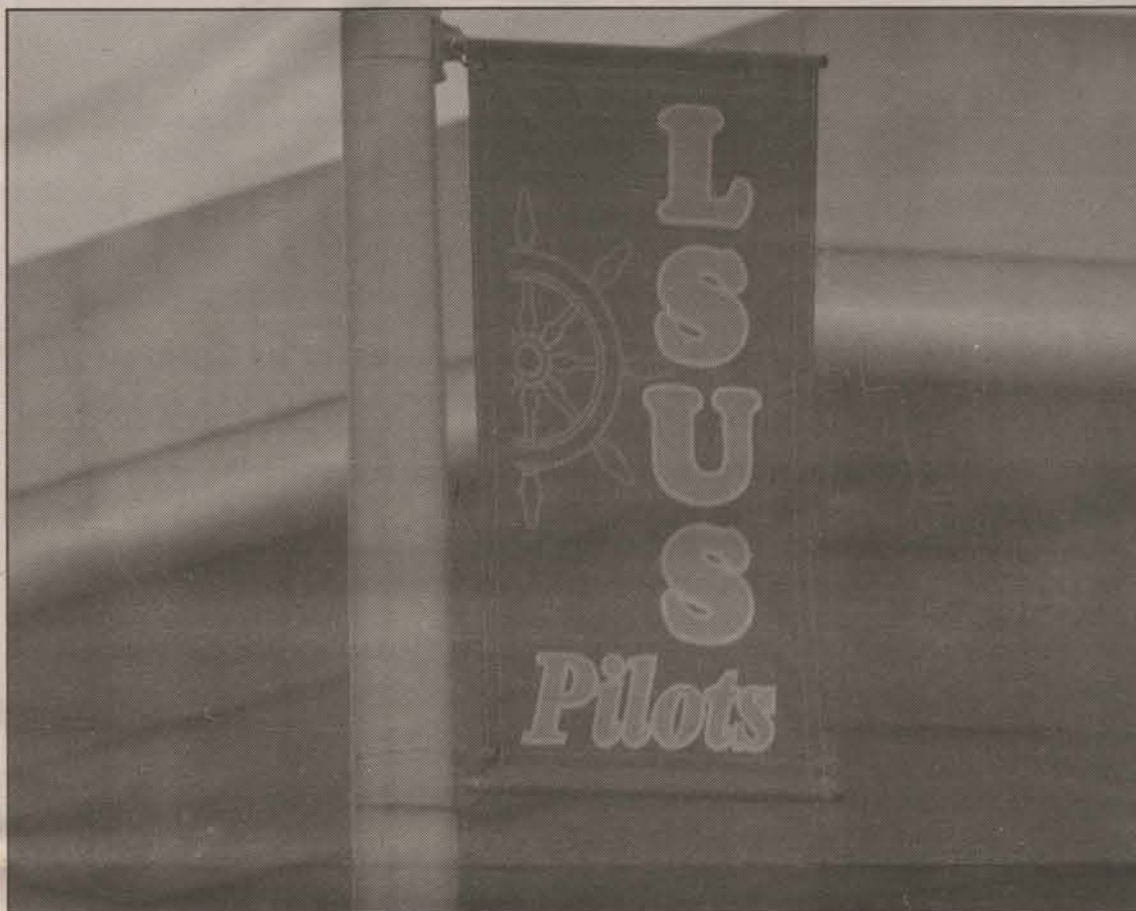
Because Kennedy's plan will slow the bill's movement through the Senate, there is still time to contact Landrieu and Vitter and tell them to make sure this legislation gets passed.

There is no indication that demand for a university education will drop off in the near future. As such, tuitions will continue to rise. It seems that in the 21st century, the American Dream will be underwritten by student loan debt. But the question of how much debt is still very much undecided.

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CAMPUS NEWS



RODRIGO MONDRAGON

New banners were placed all around campus just in time for the beginning of school. The banners are on every street light on campus and alternate in the school's colors of blue and gold.

Banners on campus add spice to university life

by Angel Arnold

Students on campus may have noticed a slight change in the school's appearance this semester. Over the Christmas break, LSUS hung new school banners. The LSUS Foundation funded the 80 banners, which are visible from the ring road, parking lots and the access road in front of the HPE building.

The LSUS Foundation paid around \$9,000 for the banners: money that came from private donations. The idea for the banners came about in 2005, but due to

lack of resources, the LSUS Foundation was not able to purchase the banners at the time. In addition, it took a while to decide on the look of the banners. With LSUS's 40th anniversary celebration approaching, Viki Fentress, director of annual support in university development, got everything in order to have the banners put in place this semester.

The banners will last two or three years. Also, because they are interchangeable, they can be replaced with new banners if one should happen to tear or if a certain campus organization would

like to have its name put on some.

The banners can also be made for special occasions. Glenda Erwin, vice chancellor of university development, said she had "wished for more," but due to the cost was not able to buy more at the time. She also stated she "hopes (they) can add more later on."

Erwin says the banners are up in order to "spruce up the campus" and to "add a little school pride." She is "excited this (project) has come to fruition" and hopes for "positive feedback" on the new banners.

Campus Briefs

School closing shortens short first week

The spring semester started off with a snag last week when icy conditions forced LSUS to shut down early.

The second day of classes started out cloudy and dry with a slight chance of freezing rain, so classes were scheduled to continue as planned. But around 10 a.m., it started to rain.

Stuart Mills, provost, had been walking the LSUS campus that morning to check on the conditions and noticed some ice starting to build up in places. Soon after Mills received word that all Caddo and Bossier parish schools had shut down for the day, he got together with Chancellor Vincent Marsala and they decided to cancel all of LSUS's remaining classes for the day.

As the day progressed, the temperature rose and the skies cleared, but, according to Mills, it's better to be safe than sorry. In the end "it really wasn't a bad day;...we really wanted to be cautious, and give people a chance to get home."

By Jeremiah Raab

University Center gets new look

Have you noticed that the University Center is getting a new look? Students will see a progressive facelift of the Port, meeting rooms and the entrance over the coming months. Joseph Pearson, director of student activities, said the cosmetic changes are simply updating the UC.

According to Pearson, this will be the first time the UC has gone through cosmetic changes of this magnitude. "We want to try to make it more comfortable for students," said Pearson. The changes will include new carpet and lounge furniture in the Port as well as new carpet in the meeting rooms upstairs. The UC already has a new coat of paint.

Pearson said that excess student activity fees are being used to buy the necessary supplies and help for this project. He explained that these funds, unlike other funds such as tuition, do not go to the state when they go unused by the university. The student activity fees are held in a special account that belongs to LSUS.

"Because we are not funded by the state, we use these reserve funds in case anything goes wrong or something needs to be replaced or fixed in the UC," Pearson said. He emphasized that this project will not increase students' fees in any way, and that what they are using is coming from fees left over from past semesters.

Joshua Yarbrough, a senior history major, was excited when he heard of the new furniture for the Port. "It's about time they replaced that stuff because it's beginning to fall apart," he said. "The chairs have gotten pretty nasty over the years."

New students coming in the fall will enter into a new and improved LSUS. The Dr. Lacy and Edie Williams Circle of Excellence Plaza will be constructed on the east side of the circular drive that runs in front of the Administration Building.

By Jessica Clinton

LSUS hires police chief

by Brittany Harness

There's a new chief in charge—chief of police, that is. Rebecca Chiles has a long list of experience behind her and endless opportunities before her, as she will now head the University Police at LSUS.

Chiles joined the team from Arkansas and has experience with college campuses. She spent six years at the University of Arkansas, from 1996 through 2001, and another six years at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia, from 2001 to just recently in 2006. She was Chief of Police at SAU for the last two-and-a-half years.

"Compared to other places, LSUS is definitely safe," Chiles said. "Number one, our people are safe, and number two, our property is also safe."

Chiles explained that she oversees the entire workings of the department on campus. She is to maintain "the general flow of things," she said, and "ensure that the philosophy of the university and department is being met."

Chiles said to expect more involvement with students, especially during the orientation process. She plans for the police to be more visible, with one police car and two police SUVs to be stationed in the parking lots.

"We will be where the students are," she said, "for more crime prevention and to ensure their safety."

"There's a fine line in the role of women in law enforcement," she said, "but I've been very fortunate. (Law enforcement is) mostly male-dominated, but if you come in and do your job well, you earn your place."



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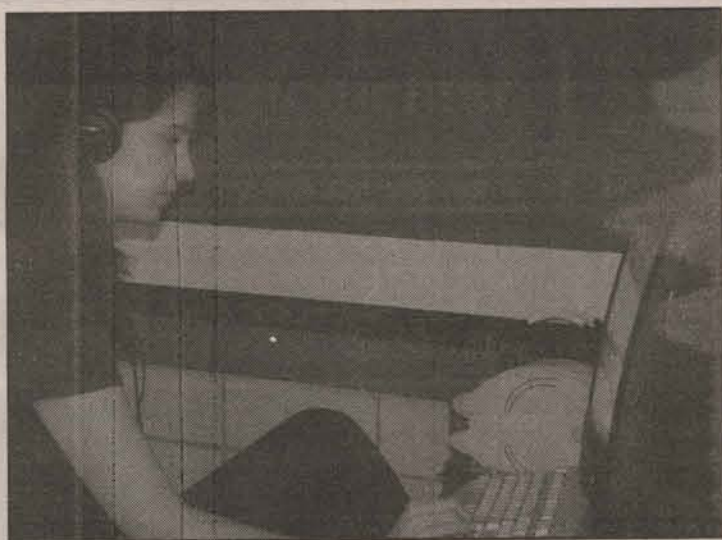
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email wpederson@lsus.edu or visit website www.lsus.edu/lincoln/washington.asp

Briana Simmons, freshman psychology major, works on homework in the LSUS Port computers lab. Although she does own a laptop, Simmons said she does not bring it up to school because without a wireless Internet connection, it would be good for little more than typing. She said if Wi-Fi were available, she could accomplish more in her free time between classes.

MIKE SCHWALKE



Funding for Wi-Fi still in works

by **Jeremiah Raab**
Ryan Tew

A failed attempt to receive state funding at last month's special legislative session leaves LSUS grasping for money elsewhere.

According to Computing Services, the idea of making LSUS wireless has been on the table for about a year, but waiting is something that they had counted on from the beginning.

Last semester, Joseph Cordaro, network administrator of computing services, said "It's going to take time," adding that even if LSUS had the funds available, they would still need to find the most efficient way of installation and then proceed in the actual installation of the hardware.

In late September, Classic Networking of Mechanicsburg, Pa., came to the LSUS campus to assess the costs and feasibility of replacing the old system with a wireless network. They came up with a cost of \$200,000, which completed the first step of the process.

"We're wanting to pursue it; we're just waiting to see if we can get the money," said Shelby Keith, di-

rector of computing services, in December. He added that if LSUS did not get the money from the state, they would look within the university for funds.

In early December, former Gov. Kathleen Blanco called a special legislative session to discuss a wide variety of topics, including extra funding for Louisiana universities. The funding for wireless Internet at LSUS was brought up at the special session, but, according to Keith, nothing happened. "The governor couldn't get the funds," said Keith.

The issue is now scheduled to be brought up again at the regular session from April 30 to the end of June, but LSUS has decided not to wait. The university is trying to secure the funds on its own.

The Office of Development and the Technology Fee Committee are working to secure funding through several different sources, and Computing Services is working with the College of Sciences and the College of Business to see if they can obtain finances to get things started.

"We're hoping that with a combination of avenues, the funding will be avail-

able to implement the project," said Keith last week.

With a wireless network set up on campus, students with laptop computers will be able to go online at just about any location.

Wireless fidelity, or Wi-Fi, uses extremely high frequencies to send its signals.

The frequencies used are higher than radio, cellular phones and televisions; therefore the only interference that can be expected will be that of other computers using the same routers.

Last semester, opinions were varied among students regarding the installation of Wi-Fi on campus. Some students were genuinely excited about the thought of LSUS going wireless.

"I'm glad we (may) finally have this," said Garth Owens, senior English major, "it's about time." But some students were not as enthusiastic.

"Wireless wouldn't matter to me," said Josh Self, senior English major. The fact that a good percentage of students do not own laptop computers and concerns of increasing technology fees are a factor that should be looked into, Self added.

LSUS revamps Web services

Moodle replaces Blackboard

by **Devin White**

Beginning this spring, Moodle takes over as the new course management system for LSUS. The expense of its predecessor, Blackboard, was the main reason for the switch.

After more than five years of using their software, the administration was informed that in order to continue with Blackboard, they would need to upgrade to a new version of the software.

"This purchase could have cost us as much as \$160,000, funds which were not available," said Scott Hardwick, assistant director of Computing Services. "The anticipated annual maintenance cost of the software itself would have risen to \$65,000."

Since Moodle is Open Source, LSUS can use the software free of charge and even customize it to suit the school's needs.

"I think its good the school is saving money and going with a better product," said John Cannon, senior biology major.

After a successful trial run with three classes during the summer of 2006, Computing Services offered professors 44 different sessions of orientation during the fall semester.

For instructors, the change makes it easier to use a digital class. In order to use the online system professors would have to request a Blackboard class. Now all classes are online.

"This doesn't mean that your professor will utilize it," said Hardwick, "but by removing that extra step of

them having to request a class, it might make some more inclined to use Moodle."

The interface is the most noticeable change students will see with Moodle. Students can check for documents and grades posted by their instructors just as they did with Blackboard.

There are some tools students and teachers will see for the first time including the calendar and upcoming events options on the main page. These give the students a summary of due dates and events from all their classes.

Of course as with all new things, it may take a while for students and teachers to adjust to the new system. There have already been a few problems with printing and Microsoft Word files not downloading properly.

"A move to a new system requires readjustment and retraining for both instructors and students," said Hardwick.

Students can find both a video and PDF handout on the front page of Moodle to help them become accustomed to the new system.

"We have attempted to make this transition as easy as possible," Hardwick said.

A student user guide is available on the Moodle homepage.

Students who are still uncomfortable with Moodle can get some extra training. Melissa Mainiero, director of institutional effectiveness for academic affairs, will offer overview classes today from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the UC Theatre.

SPORTS

LSUS Pilots struggle defensively, lose

by Chrissy Chiri

The LSUS men's basketball team have played just above .500 percent in conference play this season. The team is 13-4 overall and 4-3 in conference, with a current two-game losing streak. They sit in fourth place in the Gulf Coast Athletic Conference.

The most recent match-up for the Pilots came on Monday against the Tougaloo College Bulldogs. Tougaloo has never beaten LSUS but managed to do so on that evening by a score of 91-78. They are sharing first place in the GCAC right now and have been a surprise squad this season.

The Bulldogs took an early 14-4 lead on Monday but

trailed by two points at half-time, 45-43. But TC scored first to begin the second half and although the Pilots managed to tie the Bulldogs seven times, they never took the lead and were handed their third conference loss of the season.

The Pilots shot 55 percent from the field but were not able to shut down Tougaloo's Darius Simmons who scored 24 points, including making 3-6 from behind the arc. Shooting percentages for the Pilots went down to only 36 percent in the second half, while Tougaloo shot 51 percent from the field.

The Pilots starting senior point guard Freddy Hughes was out with a sprained right ankle. He averages 15.6

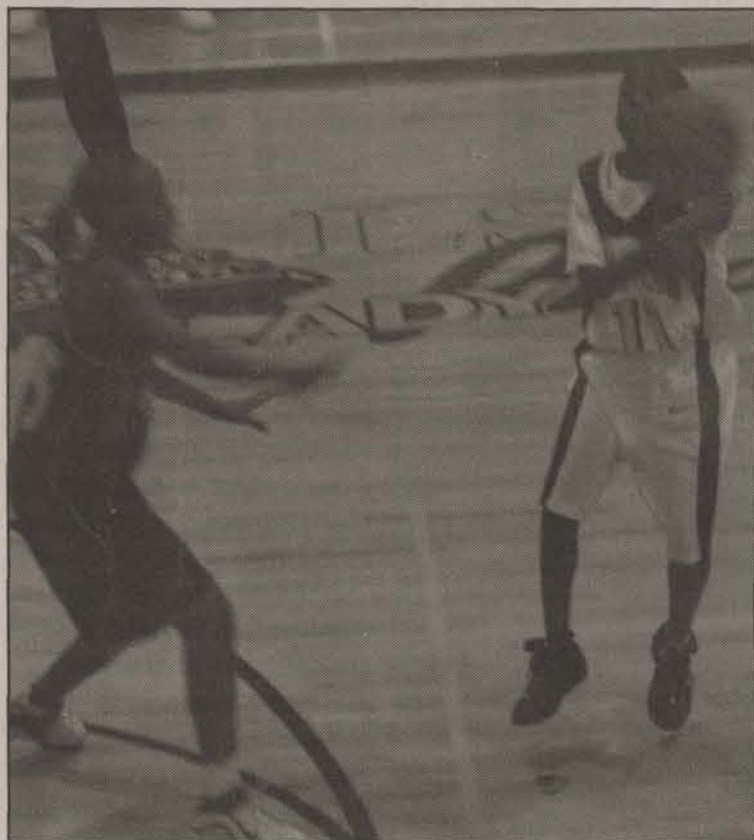
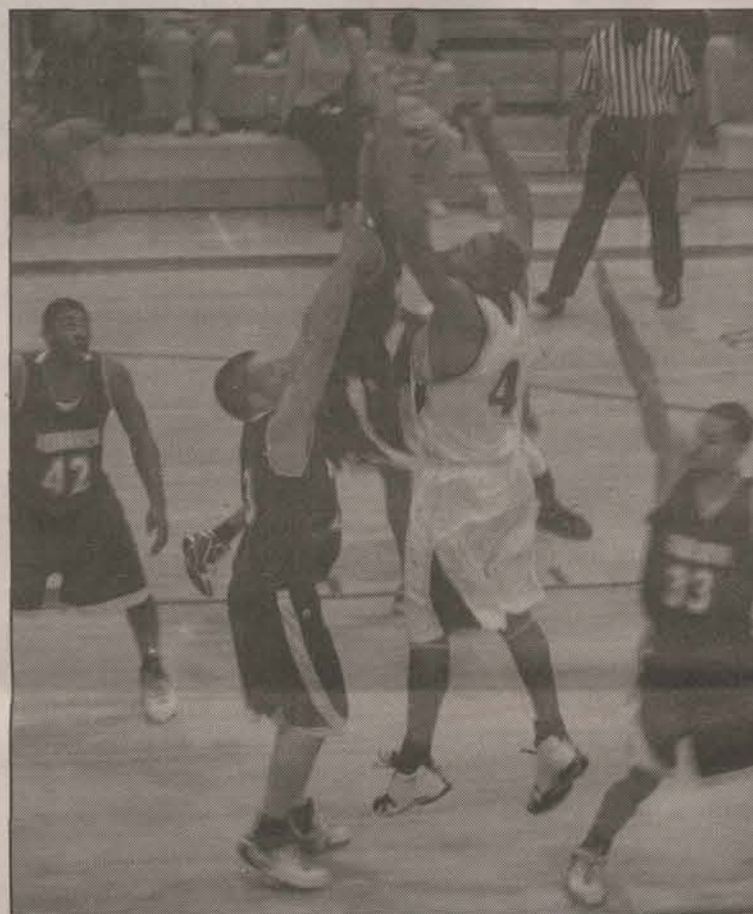
points and 6.4 assists per game.

Senior forward Blake Whittle once again led the Pilots offensively with 19 points. Senior guard Travis Cash had 18 points and junior post Jamon Morris added 15 points.

LSUS will play the Loyola University Wolfpack tonight in New Orleans at 7:30 p.m.; then they will play Southern University of New Orleans on Saturday at 7 p.m.

LSUS senior forward Kyle Byrd goes up for a rebound against conference opponent Belhaven Blazers. In Monday night's match-up against Tougaloo College, the Pilots lost 91-78.

RODRIGO MONDRAGON



RODRIGO MONDRAGON

Lady Pilot Teokea Wilkerson, junior point guard, makes a pass in Monday night's 88-76 win against Tougaloo College.

Lady Pilots pick up win

by Chrissy Chiri

The LSUS Lady Pilots bounced back Monday from a heartbreaking double overtime, one-point loss on Saturday. The women's squad beat Tougaloo College 88-76 at home Monday evening.

The Lady Pilots offense scored the most points they have all season in conference against the Lady Bulldogs.

LSUS is now 7-9 overall and 3-4 in conference. They are in seventh place in the Gulf Coast Athletic Conference, with Xavier University in first place with a perfect 7-0 conference record.

The Lady Pilots were looking to pick up a win af-

ter being beat by William Carey College in Hattiesburg Saturday. The lady Crusaders beat the Lady Pilots in a double overtime match by a score of 60-59.

The LSUS women's team led by 12 at half-time against Tougaloo College and never looked back. The Lady Bulldogs have 1-6 conference record and are in ninth place in the GCAC out of 10 teams.

Every player for the Lady Pilots scored in the win.

Senior guard Jessica Kelly led her team with a double-double by scoring 15 points and collecting 11 rebounds.

Junior post Kacie Cryer also had 15 points. Sopho-

more center Quan Joseph had 14 points for her team, while junior post Janai Sells had 11 points and five rebounds. Junior guard Edie Leonards added 10 points; freshman forward Terriyon Fairley had nine points; senior guard Moche Roque scored seven points; junior point guard Teokea Wilkerson added five points and five assists and freshman guard Tish Flowers chipped in with two points.

The LSUS squad will now travel to New Orleans for a two-game road trip. They will play the Loyola University Wolfpack and then play Southern University in New Orleans on Saturday.

ENTERTAINMENT

UPCOMING COMMON HOUR ENTERTAINERS SCHEDULE

Jan. 25 – Scratch Track

Feb. 6 – Easily Amused

March 1 – A-1/Erin

March 13 – Molly Dean

March 27 – Brazz Tree

April 12 – Student artists

UPCOMING MOVIE NIGHT SCHEDULE

Jan. 25 – The Guardian

Feb. 13 – Akeelah and the Bee

Feb. 21 – Pirates of the
Caribbean: The Curse of the
Black Pearl

Feb. 22 – Pirates of the
Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest

March 28 – SuperSize Me

April 20 – Charlotte's Web

April 26 – Casino Royale

May 3 – Pursuit of Happyness

'Pan's Labyrinth' shows detail

by Chris Gray

Before I begin I would like to welcome everyone back this semester, and I hope all of you will enjoy the reviews.

"Pan's Labyrinth" director Guillermo Del Toro ("Blade2," "Hellboy") tells the story of Ofelia, a girl who's destiny is not tied to this world. Using superb acting, stunning visual effects and a story that is beautiful and deep, Del Toro shows his capabilities as a director.

Ivana Baquero portrays the heroine Ofelia with such passion that I couldn't help but fall in love with the character. Her body language conveyed so much emotion, and her verbal acting complimented the beauty of the Spanish language. Not only did Baquero give an amazing performance, but the supporting cast showed they were truly talented actors as well.

Sergi Lopez plays Captain Vidal, Ofelia's adopted father and commander of a

battalion of Spanish soldiers at the end of World War II. Lopez, the villain of the film, is supposed to be the audience's least favorite character, but his acting has such style that it is hard not to be enveloped by his screen presence.

One of the best performances of the film was given by Maribel Verdu. She portrayed Mercedes, Vidal's personal maid. Verdu showed versatility in her role by being able to convey so many different emotions in short periods of time. She went from happy to distraught to sad in a matter of a few minutes, and I believed every emotion was genuine. All of the actors displayed their talents as performers with the help of Del Toro's direction.

The special effects in the film caught the eye. From the CGI fairies and gun shot wounds, to the actual make-up effects of monsters and fauns, the special effects enhanced the story but did not detract from it. The effects

were used to help tell the story instead of just being mindless and thrown into the film as eye candy.

The cinematography and direction used by Del Toro was not necessarily unique or ground-breaking, but his camera angles and ability to direct actors made this a breath-taking film. His camera usage and scene setup brought emotion and depth to the film. Where most directors wouldn't be able to capitalize on cinematography to make a good film, Del Toro uses the camera to capture not only the film but the essence of the story. The way the actors were able to portray emotion through body language and dialog is a testament to his ability to direct people while using special effects as a supplement to a unique and original story.

"Pan's Labyrinth" is a wonderful fantasy romp with a driving story, great acting and superb directing. It is a must see for all fans of the fantasy genre.

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FUN & GAMES

Support Your Mass Communications Department

The mass communications department will be producing a bi-weekly news show, but they need your help. They want to know what you want to see and hear as well as needing a name/title for the news show. Send suggestions for a name and show ideas to the Almagest.

Bert Stroud, the Anthropologist

Sudoku Puzzle

		4		6		1		8
1	5		9				7	
		3		4	2	6		
		9	3		8			4
	4			7		9	1	
7	2				5		8	
4			6			2		7
9		2		5			6	
	1		8		9			3

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

By: Mike Schwalke and Diego Tripodi



LSUS Sports Schedule

Thursday, Jan. 25

5:30 p.m.

LSUS at Loyola University*
in New Orleans
(women's basketball)

7:30 p.m.

LSUS at Loyola University*
in New Orleans
(men's basketball)

Saturday, Jan. 27

5 p.m.

LSUS at SUNO*
in New Orleans
(women's basketball)

7 p.m.

LSUS at SUNO*
in New Orleans
(men's basketball)

Thursday, Feb. 1

5:30 p.m.

Dillard at LSUS*
(women's basketball)

7:30 p.m.

Dillard at LSUS*
(men's basketball)

Friday, Feb. 2

6:30 p.m.

LSUS at Lubbock University
in Lubbock, Texas
(baseball)

Saturday, Feb. 3

1 p.m.

LSUS at Lubbock University
in Lubbock, Texas
(baseball double-header)

5 p.m.

LSUS at UM in Mobile, Ala.
(women's basketball)

7 p.m.

LSUS at UM in Mobile, Ala.
(men's basketball)

* asterisk denotes
conference game